Notice on M. Beyle by himself

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Sunday, April 30 1837

Paris (Hôtel Favart)

It's pouring with rain.

I remember that Jules Janin said to me:

'Ah! What a good article we'd do on you if you were dead!

So as to escape from these sentences I had the whim of writing the article myself.

Do not read this until the death of…

Beyle (Henri), born on January 23 1783, died on …. His parents were affluent and belonged to the upper-middle classes. His father, lawyer at the Parliament of the Dauphiné, was certified to be noble. His grandfather was a doctor, a spirited man and a friend, or at least worshipper of Voltaire. M. Gagnon, as that was his name, was the most gallant man on earth and highly considered in Grenoble. He was involved in all the city's projects. The young Beyle first saw blood spilt on the famous journée des Tuiles in the French Revolution (17…) The people revolted against the government and from the rooftops threw tiles on the soldiers below. The parents of the young B… were pious and became ardent aristocrats. His mother, a spirited woman who read Dante, died very young. M. Gagnon, inconsolable at the loss of his darling daughter, took over the
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education of her only son. The family had exaggerated ideas of pride and honour that were communicated in a pointed way to the young man. To speak of money, even in the most indirect way was considered rude in the house of M. Gagnon, a man who perhaps had eight or nine thousand livres of annual income, which made him a rich man in Grenoble in 1789.

The young Beyle began to consider the city with a feeling of loathing that would last until his death. It was there that he learned to understand men and their baseness. He had a passionate desire to go to Paris and make his living writing books and plays. His father declared that he did not want to see his morals corrupted and that he would not see Paris before the age of thirty.

From 1796 to 1799 the young Beyle concentrated on mathematics alone. He hoped to win a place at the Ecole polytechnique and see Paris.In 1799 he won the first prize in mathematics at the Ecole centrale (teacher: M. Dupuy). The eight students awarded the second prize were admitted to the Ecole polytechnique two months after. The aristocratic party expected the Russians at Grenoble, they cried:

O Rus, quando ego te aspiciam !★

The examiner Louis Monge did not come that year. Everything was going wrong in Paris.

All these young people left for Paris to take the exam at the school itself. Beyle arrived in Paris on November 10 1799 and on the next day of Brumaire 18, Napoleon seized power. Beyle was recommended to M. Daru, former Secretary General of Intendance for the Languedoc, a serious and firm man. To him Beyle declared with a force of character highly unusual for someone his age that he did not wish to enter the Ecole Polytechnique.

They were sent on the expedition to Marengo. Beyle was there and M. Daru (who had since become a minister of the Empreror) had him named second lieutenant of the 6th regiment of dragoons, in May 1800. He spent a while as a simple dragoon. He fell in love with Mme. A. [Angela Pietragua].

He spent his time in Milan. It was the happiest time of his life. He loved music, literary glory and held in high estime the art of swordsmanship. He was injured in the foot by a bullet in a duel. He was the aide-de-camp of Lieutenant-General Michaud. He served well and was commended with a handsome certificate

from the General (in possession of M. Colomb, intimate friend of the author). He was the happiest and most foolish of men when peace arrived and the ministry of war ordered all the aides-de-camp back to their corps. Beyle rejoined the 6th regiment at Savigliano in Piemont. Already sick, he was injured and was granted leave, went to Grenoble, fell in love and, without telling the minister followed Mlle V [Victorine Koubly], who he loved, to Paris. The minister got angry, Beyle resigned, which estranged him from M. Daru. His father wanted to hang him out to dry.

B...., more foolish than ever, started to study to become a great man. He saw Mme A.[lexandrine] once a fortnight and the rest of the time he lived alone. In this way he spent his life between 1803 and 1806, confiding his ideas to nobody and hating the tyranny of the Emperor who stole freedom from France. M. Mante, graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique, Beyle's friend, engaged him in a kind of plot in favour of Moreau (1804). Beyle worked twelve hours a day. He read Montaigne, Shakespeare, Montesquieu and wrote his opinion of them. I do not know why he hated and distrusted the famous hacks that he used to see briefly at M. Daru's residence. Beyle was introduced to M. l'abbé Delille. Beyle distrusted Voltaire, who he found puerile and Mme de Staël who he found pompous and Bossuet who seemed to him like a bad joke. He adored the fables of La Fontaine, Corneille and Montesquieu.

In 1804 Beyle fell in love with Mlle Mélanie Guilbert (Mme de Baskoff) and followed her to Marseille after splitting with Mad… that he loved so much since. It was a real passion. Mlle M. G. left the Theatre of Marseille, Beyle returned to Paris; he father proceeded to go bankrupt and sent him hardly any money. Martial Daru Under-Inspector of Taxes pushed Beyle to follow him into the army. Beyle was extremely annoyed and gave up his studies.

October 14 or 15 1806 Beyle saw the Battle of Iena and the 26 he saw Napoleon enter Berlin. Beyle went to Brunswick as Provisional Deputy War Commissar. In 1808 he started at Richemont house (10 minutes from Brunswick), his residence as War Commissar, a remnant of the Spanish War of Succession. In 1909 he was on the Vienna Campaign, still as trainee commissioner of war. He fell ill there and fell strongly in love with a loveable and good, or rather excellent lady, with whom he had had an affair before.

B... was named Auditor to the Council of State and Intendant of the Imperial domains under the patronage of Count Daru. He went on the Russian campaign and distinguished himself by his sang-froid. He only learned what a disaster the retreat was on his return to Paris. Five hundred and fifty thousand men crossed the River Niemen and fifty or perhaps eighty thousand crossed it on the way back.

B... was on the Lutzen campaign and was quartermaster at Sagan in Silesia, on the Bobr. Extreme fatigue gave him a fever which was almost to finish him but Gall treated him very well in Paris. In 1813 B. was send with the 7th Division alongside an idiotic senator. Napoleon explained at length to B... what he was expected to do.

The day the Bourbons came back to Paris, B... had the sense to understand that there was no more in France than the humiliation for what had happened in Moscow. Mme Beugnot offered him the post of Director of supplies for Paris. He refused the post and moved instead to Milan. The horror he felt towards the Bourbons was stronger than the love he believed he saw approaching fulfillment with Mme A. It would be ridiculous to tell of all the incidents, as the Italians would say, that were caused by this passion. He published The Life of Haydn and Rome, Naples and Florence in 1817 as well as The History of Painting [in Italy]. In 1817 he came back to Paris and it revolted him: he then went to London and after back to Milan.

In 1821 he lost his father, who had neglected his own business interests (in Claix) to concentrate on those of the Bourbons (as Deputy Mayor of Grenoble) and was completely ruined. In 1815, B. had it explained to his son (by M. Félix Faure) that he

would be left 10 000 francs of annual income but he left only 3000 francs in total. Thankfully B... had 1 000 francs of annual income from the dowry of his mother (Mlle Henriette Gagnon, died in Grenoble around 1790, whom he missed and adored always). In Milan B. wrote Love by pencil.

B..., unhappy in every respect, came back to Paris in July 1821. He thought seriously about putting an end to it all when he discovered that Mme de C. had eyes for him. He did not want to sail again into this stormy sea and threw himself into the feud of the Romantics. He published Racine and Shakespeare, The Life of Rossini, Promenades in Rome, etc. He made two trips to Italy and went into Spain, as far as Barcelona. The Spanish campaign did not allow him to go further.

While he was in England (in September 1826), he was left by his mistress C., mentioned above. He was very upset and returned to Italy.

In 1829, he loved G… and spent the night with her, to protect her, on July 29. He saw the Revolution of 1830 from under the columns of the Théâtre-Français. The Swiss guards were below the milliner's, Moizan. In September 1830, he was named consul at Trieste. M. de Metternich was angry over Rome, Naples and Florence and refused to sign the exequatur. B… was named

consul at Civitavecchia. He spent half the year in Rome, he wasted time, as for literary activities, he wrote Le Chasseur vert [Lucien Leuwen] and got some short stories together, such as Vittorio Accoramboni, Beatrix Cenci, etc. 8 or 10 in-folio volumes.

In May 1836, he came back to Paris thanks to leave granted by M. Thiers, who is repeating the blunders of Napoleon… B... arranged The Life of Nap… from November 9 1836 to June 1837…

(I haven't reread these pages, written from 4 to 6, on Sunday April 30, abominable rain, at the Hôtel Favart, place des Italiens, in Paris).

B… wrote his epitaph in 1821.

Here lies

Arrigo Beyle Milanese

Lived, wrote, loved

Died in the year…

In 18…⋆⋆

He loved Cimarose, Shakespeare, Mozart, Coreggio. He loved V…, M…, A…, Ange., M…, C… passionately and, even

though he was far short of handsome, he was much loved by four or five of those represented by initials.

He respected one man alone: NAPOLEON.

End of this un-proofed notice (so as not to lie)

[On the verso of the last folio] Notice on Henry Beyle, to be read after his death, not before.

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*O country home, when shall I look on you again?

**Qui giace

Arrigo Beyle Milanese,

Visse, scrisse, amo

Se n'andiede di anni...

Nell 18...
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